

for you
6 July 70

to Weisberg/Roffman

Dear Harold:

I have much of your correspondence, but not too much to write, since I just returned from week-long canoe trip when I was out of touch with everything but rain, mosquitoes, and fish.

The trip was a gas; very difficult in several places, but all fun (in retrospect, at least). If you saw the movie, "The African Queen", and remember Humphrey Bogart dragging the boat through the swamp, ungluing himself from slimy mud, and ~~wikwik~~ writhing with leeches, then you will have an idea of what I and my companion went through on the first morning. It was gasty. We lugged the boat and baggage through the swamp in the hope of reaching a stream that we thought he could navigate. We couldn't. The stream was shallow, with rocks all about, but al teast it was clean and clear-- we sat in it as we ate lunch and cleared most of the goo from our bodies. We then carried up the stream and finally reached a navigable lake. That was gorgeous. When we reached our camping spot, I just leaned back into the water and soaked(clothes, hat, and all) until I was again refreshed. Deeeeeliscious! The fishing that evening made up for the hardship; it was great. The rest of the trip continued with similar events, though none quite as bad as that first.

The last memorable event was a dandy, too. We wanted to keep fish on the last night so that we could take some home (we had been eating a few bass, but putting most fish back). We kept the ten best of those that we caught on the last evening, anticipating that we ~~won~~ would filet and wrap them when we got back to camp after nightfall. The mosquitoes had other ideas. My buddy had suggested that we return early so as to clean the fish before the mosquitoes got hungry, but I was having a good time and said we would stick to it until dark and clean the fish in the boat well away from shore ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ (mosquitoes can't swim, you see, and I thought--heaven help me-- that they couldn't fly far either). As a matter of fact, the last fish that we caught was the largest of the trip-- a real beauty. When fishing was over, we paddled back to camp to get something on which to rest the fish for fileting. The m's zeroed-in with deadly accuracy, and in squadrons-- worse (it seemed) than on previous nights, when their aim wasn't at all bad, either. Hoping to outrun the m's, we paddled like the wind to the middle of the lake; the little bastards not only stuck with us for the whole run, but when we got there they somehow-- even with their wee little voices-- called in reinforcements. Holding that great knife as I was cutting fish, and all the time trying to brush off m's from arms and around head, I was sure that before we were finished I would accidentally slit my throat from ear to ear. I didn't, but did puncture my wrist~~here and there~~ which is sometimes nearly as good as cutting your throat, but I understand that it takes somewhat longer to die that way. Anyway, those few cuts didn't bleed much, since the m's had already take a heavy toll of my blood.

Fun!

Except for mail from you and Howard, the only thing of interest in the mail is an LA Free Press article reporting disclosures on the RFK shooting. Unlike much of what is printed there, this seems a sane and responsible piece. It's LAFFP of 12 June 70 (reprinted by Penn Jones on 18 June). Godfret Isaac (Dr Noguchi's lawyer) and Theodore ~~Gerrlach~~ (a former newscaster who was witness to the shooting) Charach

charge that RFK was shot not only by Sirhan, but fatally by a part-time security guard Thane Eugene Cesar, a right-winger and Wallace supporter. Charach did the work on the case; Isaac seems mostly on hand for legal help. They have at least one witness, Don Schulman (who was very close to RFK) who says he saw Cesar shoot RFK from closer than Sirhan shot. They also have photos which they assert point to a third shooter. There is, too, some witness support for Schulman's account.

If you have not seen this article, tell me and I'll send a copy. In the mean time, I intend to write to Isaac for further info and to ask to be kept informed.

I had not previously heard of Charach, but know of Isaac thru his efforts for Noguchi. On that basis alone, I am strongly inclined to trust his good sense and integrity.

Nor do I see anything inherently unbelievable about their assertions. Indeed, even before this I was convinced that at least one other than Sirhan was shooting.

The Wash. Post article on release of Ray papers seemed good treatment-- I didn't notice the usual editorial slant. Glad you got some notice, but I think the headline should somehow have indicated that the papers had to be pried out.

Kopechne clippings: I have more than enough clippings to satisfy my interest, but think it might be a good idea if you sent me the clippings, anyway. If the occasion comes to make a record, I will at least be keeping a large supply of press data on this matter, and it just might be of use later.

Suits: I have no advice to offer. Things seem to be going so well, that there is nothing I can add except "carry on". The most important ones are yet to come. By winning a few preliminaries you may attract attention and possibly get some financial support.

Ray papers: If you think there is anything that I can add to what you have done, please send these and let me go over them. Perhaps only the stuff on firearms matters, in which I have special knowledge and may spot something that you missed. Use your judgment; I read whatever you send.

Nix/Muchmore: I want these, but do not want them from Lifton. I have not yet answered his last insane letter of a couple of months ago, and expect that I have now reached his shit-list-- if I was not already included there in parentheses previously.

Goats: I know why my dad stinks (like a male goat). Do tell me why male goats stink.

Bradley: Your latest comment confuses me. I had considered Bradley's account of his whereabouts on 22 Nov as spurious, and for other reasons considered him a likely suspect. Your info about the man identifying him as Braden seems to indicate that the identification is reliable. I was virtually convinced that Bradley was Braden, and that Braden was illicitly involved-- if not as a shooter, at least as one with knowledge before the fact. There is conflict between Larry Floer's account that he used the phone on Dal-Tex 3rd floor and Braden's story that the phone was out of order (maybe it was Floer who said it was out of order, and Braden who said he used it; I'm not sure). Let's save this matter until we can talk, for it would consume pages.

I have some rewriting to do before I submit the final version of my thesis-- this will take about two weeks, after which I will be "home free" regarding my Ph.D. I believe I wrote and told you I passed the oral exam with no trouble. I should have the degree in hand by September, when degrees are issued. My promotion and raise in pay will come before that-- when the thesis is in and the degree is in the bag. As it is, it is in the bag, but the bag is not quite tied tightly.

I'll continue with letter to Howard.

Dick

Howard:

Howdy.

I got your letter and excellent comparison on medical reports. Thanks. I look forward to seeing pictures, which I expect you will send as soon as is convenient for you.

Keep the Document. Addendum as long as you need it.

399 base pix: I agree we should withhold definite assertions re alterations until better evidence becomes available. I would not make such assertions on the basis of what I have seen.

399 fragment: You know my firm opinion that 399 lost no metal from the base except at the crater. If I see a piece that indicates otherwise, I would immediately consider it spurious. If you have seen a photo of the frag, perhaps it is flat as you view the flat part. If so, it is flat and very thin. I would suspect that it came from the area that we call the "ridge". When the crater was cut, it could have left a ~~flame~~ flake sticking out loosely from that "ridge". I really can't say for sure without having seen what evidence bears on this. If it is too big to come from the crater, then I'm inclined to think it phoney. I would be interested to learn whether anyone can suggest from where else on the base metal is missing; I can't-- absolutely can't-- find any other place.

Shirt slits: By all means send me a copy of Harold's photo, for it is hard to comment on the basis of one's verbal descriptions. Besides, there is always the chance I will spot what others may miss. The more good eyes on things, the better.

Baker/Couch: I have not tried because I do not have the uncut version of Dillard's photo (it shows much more of the building than any published version), but perhaps it would be possible to locate Dillard's position by comparing corresponding photos in the SS reconstruction photos-- the ones showing a car on Houston. Sprague has the whole Dillard; mabey Newcomb and Lifton have it, too.

Neck Frags: Your comment that "knowledge that there were fragments is enough" is, I think, sensible. I still firmly believe you will find frags suggesting the remains of a small caliber frangible bullet of very high velocity. I know that this implies I believe the detailed descriptions given by Panel docs are false. Imagine them having inadvertently mentioned the frags without fully appreciating the significance of what they were saying-- but being compelled, through fear of exposure, to say something about them in their report.

Suddenly, some inquiring punk casts the frags in their face, and they realize what a menacing cat they have let out of the bag to harry all their pigeons. Bothersome, no? What would you have replied to such inquiries? I imagine that the A-P X-rays show something like this: numerous tiny fragments scattered in an area about the size of a fist to the right of the trachea; among them would be three or four discernibly larger fragments representing a view of the burst bullet jacket. The lateral view: numerous tiny frags dispersed in the area behind the trachea, spread in a more or less conical configuration with the point of the cone beginning just behind the trachea; the larger fragments (except the copper) normally would penetrate farther, but this principle may not strictly apply to the neck area, since there are some relatively unobstructed areas where small frags may penetrate as deeply as large. That, of course, is purely a guess, but for me it has been a working hypothesis. If I felt I could trust the Panel docs, I would abandon it, but they cannot be trusted.

Skull ~~xxxxx~~ matter: Front shot could indeed produce the pieces flying forward. I tended to exclude that these pieces were so cast because I believed that they flew far forward. Irrespective of other evidence, the piece(s) visible in Zapruder are consistent with both a shot from the rear or a shot from the front. If there were not positive evidence that the hole on the back/top of head was caused by a shot from the rear, I would say that what we see in Z shows the effect of but one shot, delivered from the front. It is other things than Z which persuade me otherwise-- i.e., almost simultaneous two shots hitting rear and front.

Now and for the next couple of weeks I shall probably not seek new areas for research, and won't have anything new to send you. If you have materials for me to see, by all means send them. I want to keep my fingers sticky, but can't now seek new mud piles of my own. I went over the medical matters a few weeks ago to see if a re-reading would allow me to catch something missed, but I think I have drained that area of whatever I can get from it. New investigative material is what's needed.

Sometime during this summer I hope finally to write up memos on the two matters concerning the microscopic photos of the cartridge cases-- just for a coherent record-- but that should not take much time once I get to it. Other than that, I have no definite prospect of what to do. I think even the stuff on Bieberdorf has been sapped for what it can give. Harold will write a few more pages on that, and I'll review what he says.

Perhaps I'll just start reading the 26 vols. again. Something new always pops up in light of what you have learned in the interim since last reading. Gary may be sending me some CD's, too. If they come, that will keep me busy.

Time's up.

Still,

Dick

P.S. (Harold): Gary Murr has not yet gotten in touch with me as he said he would. He at first expressed great interest in seeing me again, and then did nothing. I'll leave him alone until he gets in touch. He has nothing new.